

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-02

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

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R 201447Z MAY 76

FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6812

INFO AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MT, LY, IZ

SUBJECT: QADHAFI SCHEDULED TO VISIT MALTA MAY 21

1. EMBASSY WAS INFORMED AFTERNOON OF MAY 20 BY GOM
MINISTRY OF COMMONWEALTH AND FOREIGN AFFAIRS THAT COLONEL
QADHAFI WILL ARRIVE IN MALTA FOR A BRIEF VISIT ON MAY 21.
VISIT WILL BE HANDLED AS A PUBLIC AFFAIR, AND QADHAFI
WILL BE ACCORDED FULL DIPLOMATIC AND MILITARY HONORS
ON ARRIVAL.

2. QADHAFI'S VISIT COMES AT A TIME WHEN ANOTHER ARAB
DELEGATION IS ALREADY IN MALTA, INFURTHERANCE OF MINTOFF'S
CAMPAIGN TO IMPRESS THE MALTESE ELECTORATE WITH HIS
IMPORTANCE ON THE INTERNATIONAL SCENE BY ATTRACTING AS
MANY HIGH-POWERED VISITORS TO THE ISLAND AS POSSIBLE.
A FOURTEEN-MAN IRAQI DELEGATION, LED BY VICE PRESIDENT
TAHA MUHYDDIN MA'ROUF (SIC) ARRIVED IN MALTA MAY 19
FOR A THREE-DAY VISIT. THE IRAQI GROUP IS RECEIVING
MAXIMUM MEDIA EXPOSURE DURING MEETINGS AND TOURS
CONNECTED WITH "DISCUSSIONS TO PROMOTE MALTESE-IRAQI
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CO-OPERATION."

3. COMMENT: MINOTFF SOUGHT THE IRAQI VISIT IN ANOTHER EFFORT TO ENCOURAGE ARAB INTEREST, AND INVESTMENT, IN THE MALTESE ECONOMY. ALTHOUGH A TRIP BY QADHAFI TO MALTA HAS BEEN "RUMORED" FOR A LEST A YEAR, THERE IS, AS YET, NO EXPLANATION AS TO WHY IT SHOULD SUDDENLY OCCUR AT THIS TIME. PRO-MINTOFF CIRCLES ARE "HINTING" THAT QADHAFI WANTS TO MEET WITH MA'ROUF CONCERNING THE SITUATION IN LEBANON, BUT WHETHER OR NOT MINTOFF (WHO FANCIES HIMSELF AN EXPERT ON THE MIDDLE EAST) WOULD BE INCLUDED IN SUCH A DISCUSSION REMAINS TO BE SEEN. WIGGINS

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